

## Alcatel-Lucent Foundation

### JA Finance Park with Sojourner Truth Middle School



On Tuesday, May 13, 2014, 21 Alcatel-Lucent employees joined 8th grade students from Sojourner Truth Middle School (East Orange, NJ) at Junior Achievement's Finance Park. This is the seventh time New Jersey employees participated in the event with many of them enjoying the experience so much that they have volunteered for the event multiple times.

The day at JA Finance Park simulates a household budget exercise for children to learn how to make real life choices regarding their monthly expenses. Kiosks are set up where they pay their bills, pick the type of car they purchase, the house in which they would like to live, and even make deposits in their savings account. At the end of the exercise, their expenses must not exceed their net monthly income.

The event is a learning experience for both the children and the volunteers. The children learned how to balance a budget and what it is like to make the hard financial choices in life. The volunteers learned how important it is to give their time, but more importantly how rewarding it is to know you have impacted young lives. Now let's hear from the students about how they viewed the day:

"I really liked how they showed us what it is like in the real world and how much responsibility you have when you're an adult. This was a great experience for me and really fun." – **Oluchi**

"My experience with JA Finance Park was very exciting. Not only was I given the opportunity to manage money, but a chance to travel into the future. All I can say is that the future (mainly dealing with money) was very stressful. But overall, JA Finance Park is a very informational program." – **Jamisa**

"I enjoyed today. I have learned important stuff about saving and learning how to make smart payments. I believe this will help me later on in life." – **Xianna**

"I learned how to spend my money wisely. I also learned to appreciate the things my parents do for me because even though this program was an example, it showed me that life as adult is not something you want to rush into." – **Lauren**

"Today I learned how to pay bills, make smart choices, and choose items carefully. This is beneficial for me because they don't teach you this in high school." – **Tanisha**

"Really, really, REALLY an amazing experience. Super fun to do and it makes me see a glimpse of the real world as an adult." – **Malia**

Crystal Law, JA Finance Park Director, sent the following message to the volunteers: "Today, you left a lasting impression on our future generation! Through your volunteerism at JA Finance Park, 83 students (8th grade) received a program that will help empower them to own their economic success. Thank you to Alcatel-Lucent and State Board of Director Jim Cocito for the tremendous support... we are so appreciative of everything you do for JANJ! Your time spent with the students, in tandem with the in-class curriculum prior to their visit, provided each student more than 24 hours of financial literacy education, at no cost to the schools & their families. JA wouldn't exist

without our volunteers like you. Please continue to serve as a JA role model and spread the good word of the JA mission."

### **About Junior Achievement of New Jersey**

Junior Achievement of New Jersey (JANJ) is dedicated to giving young people the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their future, and make smart academic and economic choices. JA programs are delivered by corporate and community volunteers. They provide relevant, hands-on experiences that give students from kindergarten through high school knowledge and skills in financial literacy, work readiness and entrepreneurship. During the 2013-14 school year, JANJ will reach more than 48,000 students in over 71 school districts across the state of New Jersey. For more information visit us at [www.janj.org](http://www.janj.org). Follow us on [Twitter](#) and like us on [Facebook](#).